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# Gender differences in place attachment and residential mobility

19th Nordic Demographic Symposium

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AALBORG UNIVERSITY  
DENMARK

# Background

Media stories in Denmark are regularly reporting that **young women are moving away from rural areas of Denmark** in order to obtain education while young men are more often staying behind (see e.g. Politiken 2010). These gender differences are often portrayed as being the result of the young men having more traditional values, being less interested in higher education and being more attached to the places where they were brought up (i.e. in predominantly rural areas).

## Udkantsdanmark bliver dummere

Kvinderne er fremtidens kloge og veluddannede, og de vil helst bo i Nordsjælland.



Af **Manja Spork**

Kvinderne er fremtidens kloge og veluddannede, og de vil helst bo i Nordsjælland. Mændene ender som ufaglærte i udkantsdanmark, hvis man skal tro ny analyse fra Arbejderbevægelsens Erhvervsråd



# Theoretical perspectives

**Places are important for young people's identities** (Howard 2000) and their **transitions** into adulthood (Cieslik & Simpson 2013).

**Places** – and the social relations and local networks residing in them – are one of the things that **enable young people to** take on a position on the labour market and hence **complete a transition to adulthood** (MacDonald & Marsh 2001).

**Places can, however, also be a barrier** for young people's ambitions if this implies having to leave behind one's family and move away from a place one is very attached to (Green & White 2007).

Research points to **gendered differences in the effect of place attachment** in young men and women:

- Traditionally, rural areas have given more opportunities for young men both in relations to **leisure time activities** (Waara 2002) but also in relation to **gaining entry to the labour market** (by taking on skilled or unskilled jobs in the industries) (Nayak 2003).
- In contrast it might be **more attractive for young women to move away** from the rural areas to pursue further education and break away from the role their mothers had had (Bjerring 2000; Taylor & Addison 2009).

# Aims of the presentation

1. Examine gender differences in place attachment and investigate to what extent they can be explained by differences in gender identity and gender ideologies.
2. Examine the impact of feelings of place attachment on actual residential mobility.

# Data

In the first analysis data is taken from a sample of young people enrolled at a secondary educational institution in North Denmark Region ( $n = 2,437$ ) collected in spring 2013.

Data linked to register data on residential history.

The measure of place attachment was taken from an Australian study (Young et al 2004).

Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem 1974) used as a measure of gender identity and selected items from Male Role Norms Inventory-Revised (Levant et al 2007) and Femininity Ideology Scale (Levant et al 2007) used as a measure of gender ideology/masculinity and femininity ideals.

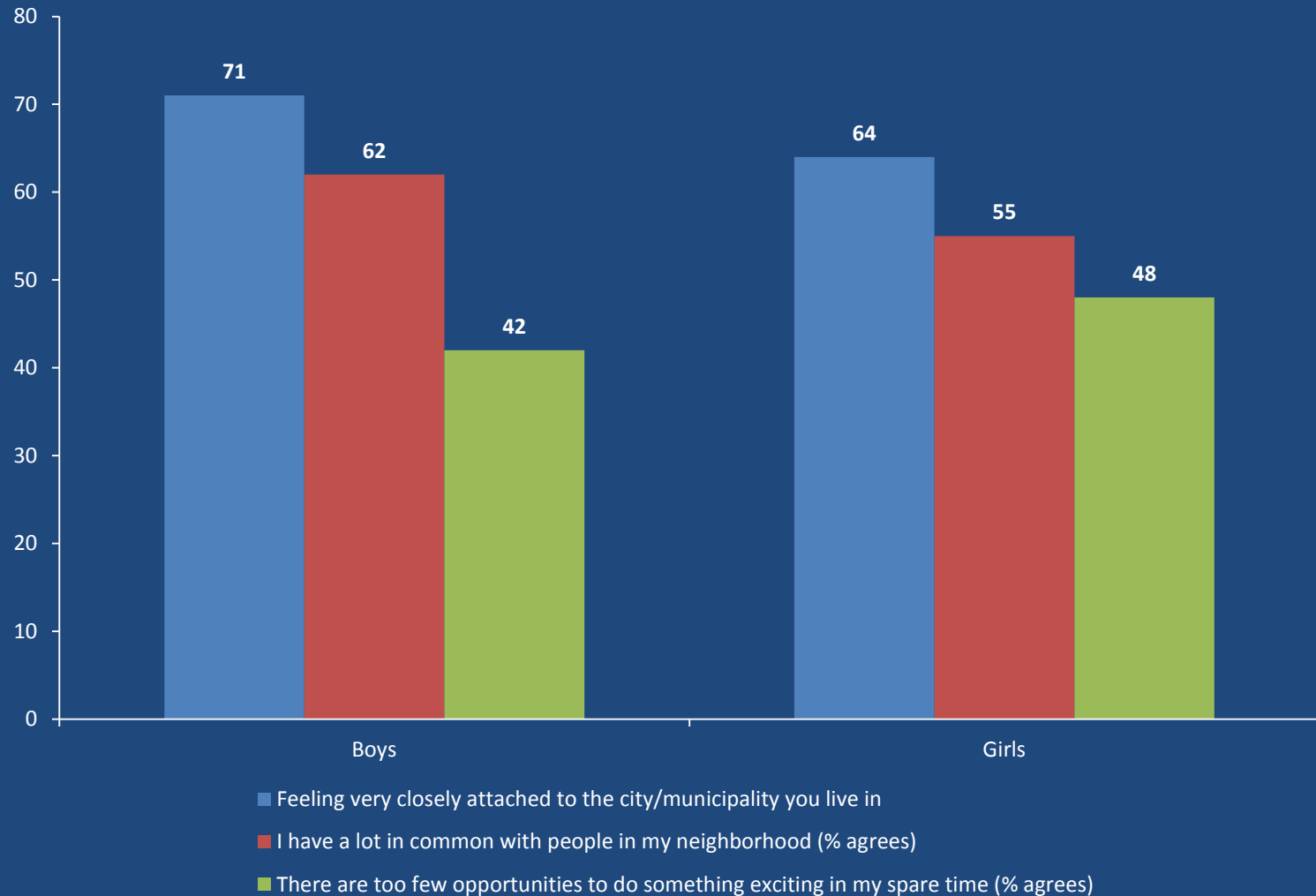
In the second analysis data is taken from the third round (conducted in 2010) of the West Jutland Cohort Study ( $n = 1,941$ ), a birth cohort study of adolescents born in 1989 living in Ringkjøbing County in 2004 (round 1).

Data linked to register data on residential mobility (defined very crudely as having changed municipality from 2011 to 2012).

The analyses were conducted as ordered logit and logit using STATA13.

# Place attachment

Young men feel more attached to the place they live



**‘I would be really sorry if I had to move away from the people in my neighbourhood’.**  
**Ordered logit. Odds ratio (95% Confidence Interval)**

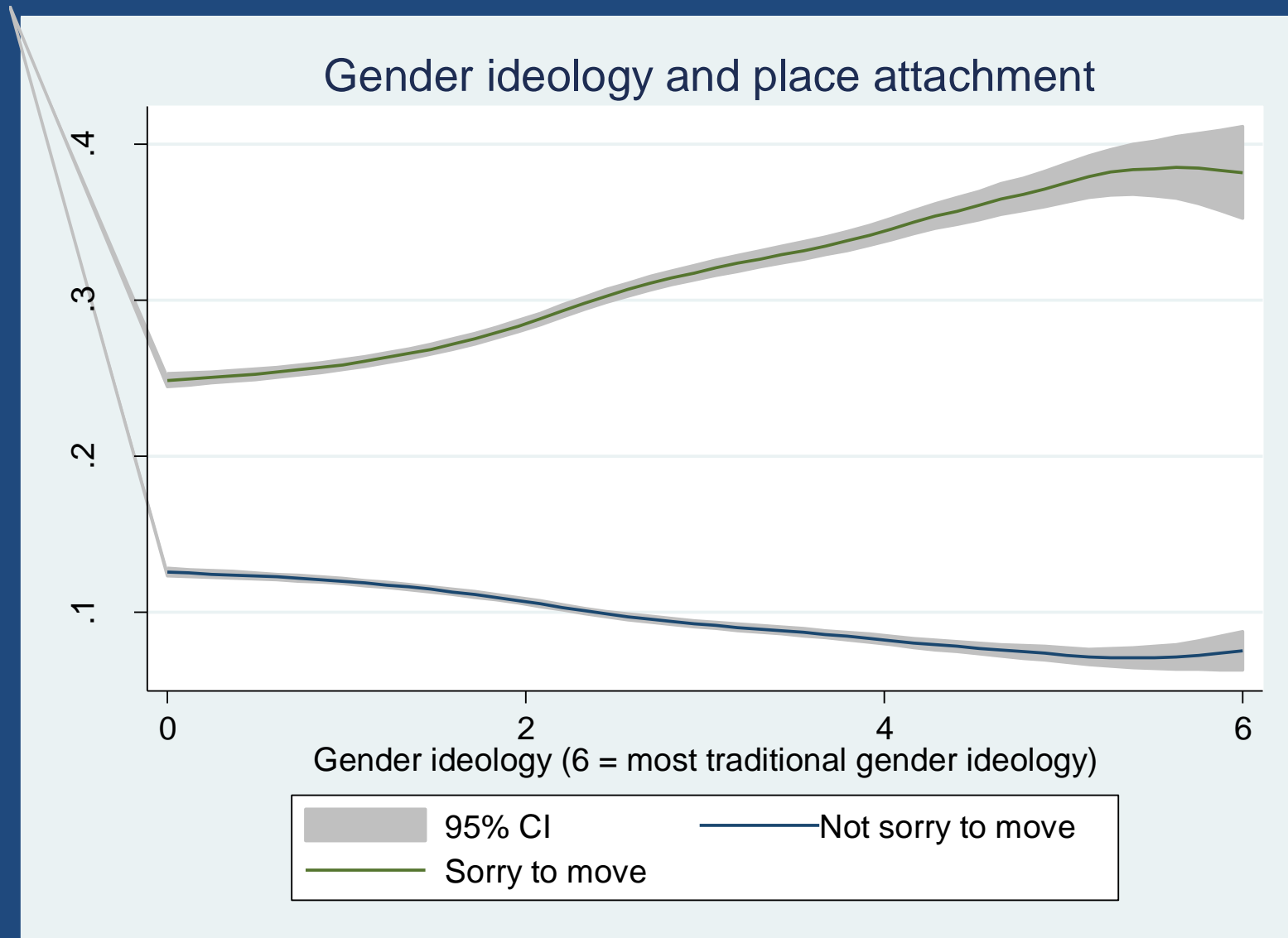
	Odds ratio
<b>Sex</b>	
Boys	1.00
Girls	0.69 (0.56-0.86)
<b>Age</b>	
Age (range: 15 to 25)	0.83 (0.78-0.90)
<b>Type of education</b>	
Gymnasium (STX)	1.00
Higher Commercial Examination Programme (HHX)	1.12 (0.93-1.36)
Higher Technical Examination Programme (HTX)	0.90 (0.61-1.34)
Vocational Education (EUD)	1.21 (0.85-1.71)
<b>Family grew up in local area</b>	
No one	1.00
Father or mother or grand parents	1.28 (1.09-1.50)
Both parents	1.55 (1.29-1.87)
<b>Number of years in current location</b>	
Increasing duration (range: 0 to 25)	1.02 (1.01-1.03)
<b>Educational aspirations</b>	
University degree	0.72 (0.60-0.88)
All other plans	1.00
<b>Gender ideology (MRNI)</b>	
Higher = more traditional gender ideology	1.12 (1.04-1.20)
<b>Gender identity (Bem Sex Role Inventory)</b>	
Traditional masculine traits	0.99 (0.98-1.01)
Traditional feminine traits	1.05 (1.04-1.07)
<b>Contact with neighbours</b>	
Never	1.00
More seldom than every month	1.46 (1.18-1.82)
1-3 times/per month	1.71 (1.34-2.18)
App. once a week	1.82 (1.34-2.48)
Several days each week	2.18 (1.64-2.90)
Standard deviations are calculated taking into account the clustering effect of having collected and sampled participants in school classes.	



**‘I would be really sorry if I had to move away from the people in my neighbourhood’.**  
**Ordered logit. Odds ratio (95% Confidence Interval)**

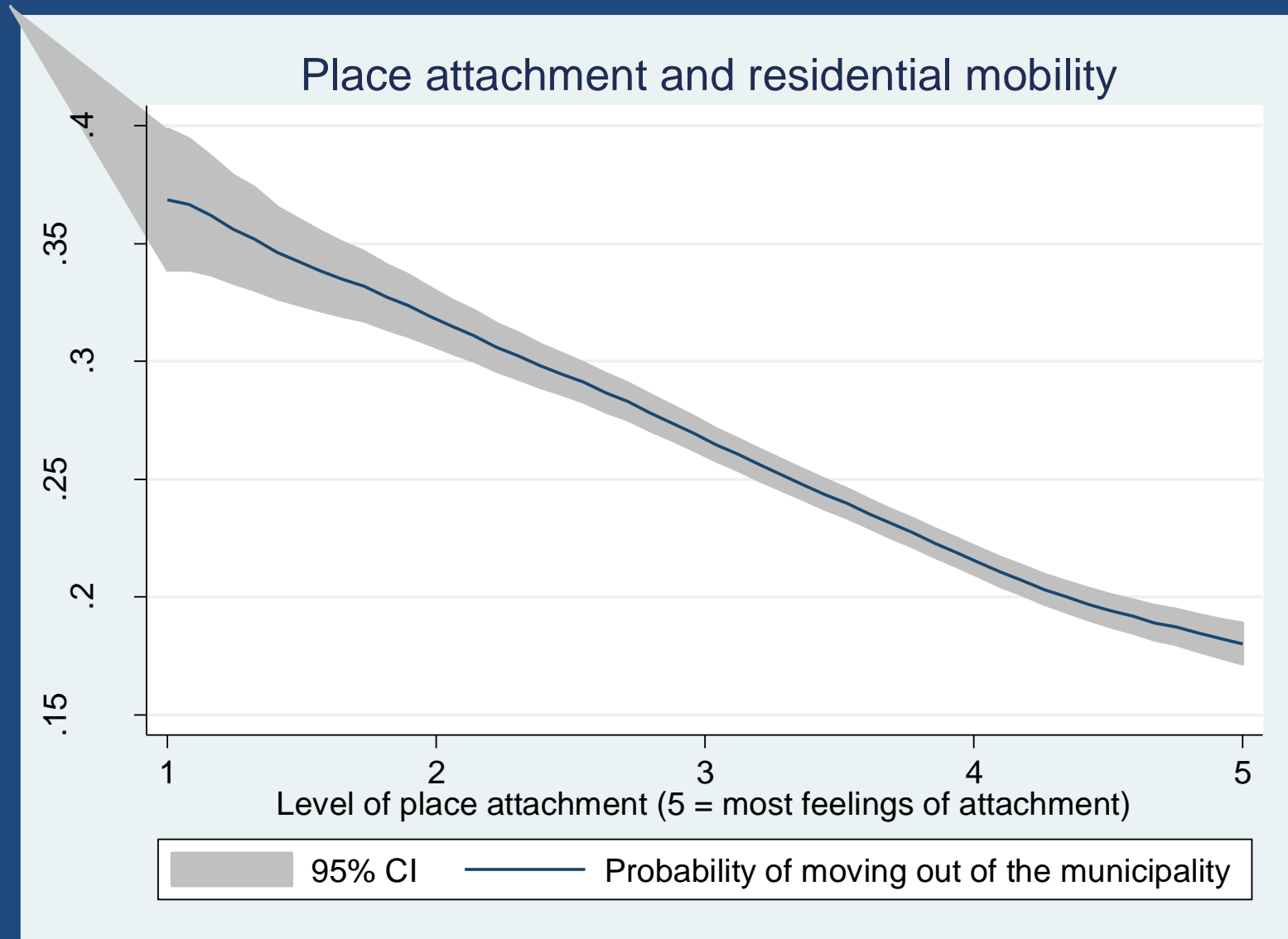
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# Gender ideology and place attachment.



# Place attachment and residential mobility.

1 year follow-up.



# Conclusions

1. There are gender differences in place attachment: those adhering to more traditional ideologies of gender are more likely to feel more attached to the place they live.
2. There is however still a sex difference between the feelings of place attachment of young women and men. Part of this (18% very roughly estimated) is explained by differences in gender ideology.
3. Analyses from the second cohort show that place attachment is associated with actual residential mobility out of current municipality in a 1 year follow-up.